MARVEL COMICS

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MACKIE
PICCIOTTO
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DANNY KETCH GHOST RIDER

PARENTAL ADVISORY

IN THE FARTHEST CORNER OF THE CYPRESS HILLS CEMETERY...

SO SHINY.

SO WARM.

SO...

...TASTY!

HOW THE MIGHTY HAVE FALLEN, BLACKOUT.

WHO ARE YOU? HOW DID YOU FIND ME?

I AM THE BROKER.

I WOULD SAY THAT YOU AND I ARE OF A SIMILAR ILK, BUT WE ALSO SHARE SIMILAR GOALS.

DARKNESS IS ALL WE SEEK.

OUR FRIEND.

OUR LOVER.

THE SOURCE OF OUR POWER.

YES.

DO YOU WANT TO BE BETTER THAN YOU WERE BEFORE YOUR SCARRING?

YES!

MY MASTER AND I BESTOW THIS GIFT UPON YOU, AND ALL WE ASK IS FOR A SMALL FAVOR OR TWO. THAT...AND A TASTE.

AIIIEEEE!

THE PAIN IS FLEETING. FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT.

TELL ME... WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I WANT...

"...GHOST RIDER!"

THE PRICE OF THE PAIN YOU INFLICTED ON THE INNOCENTS AT THEIR PLACE OF WORSHIP TONIGHT...

...IS THE PENANCE STARE!

A DARKENING HEART

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NO...NO... NO...

NO... NO...NO...

FEEL THE PAIN AND TORMENT YOU HAVE CAUSED... LIVE WITH IT THIS NIGHT...AND FOREVER.

-PTOOEY-

WOW... YOU'VE GOTTEN POSITIVELY CHATTY THESE DAYS.

THERE WAS HARDLY ANY TALK OF VENGEANCE, THE INNOCENT BLOOD BEING SPILLED OR ANY OF THE OTHER STUFF THAT YOU REPEAT OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

YOU FEELING OKAY, BUDDY?

OKAY... GOOD TALK.

IF YOU'RE DONE HERE... CAN I MAYBE SPEAK TO THE KID?

FWOOSH

I DON'T THINK GHOST RIDER COMPLETELY TRUSTS YOU, CARETAKER.

-PTOOEY-

YOU CAN READ SKULL FACE'S MIND NOW, DAN?

IT'S MORE OF A FEELING.

DO LET ME KNOW IF IT *FEELS* LIKE THE *SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE* IS GETTING DEPRESSED, WILL YOU?

IS THERE A POINT TO THIS? WHAT DO YOU WANT NOW?

SORRY, KID. I'VE HAD A ROUGH COUPLE OF DAYS AND WANTED TO CHECK IN ON YOU AND YOUR OTHER HALF.

BLAZE?

YEAH. HEARD HE WAS IN TOWN, AND YOU GUYS HAD A RUN-IN WITH SOME SUPER-POWERED BAD GUYS LAST WEEK.

JUST ANOTHER DAY IN WHAT PASSES FOR MY LIFE.

WE TOOK CARE OF IT, AND THEN BLAZE TOOK OFF UPSTATE TO BE WITH THE *QUENTIN CARNIVAL* AND HIS FAMILY.

YEAH...JUST BE CAREFUL. THERE'S SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT IN THIS CITY RIGHT NOW.

I THINK THERE'S A NEW PLAYER... SOMETHING BAD... I CAN FEEL IT IN MY BONES.

YOU "FEEL" IT? WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?

DON'T BE A SMART-ASS, DAN.

JUST PAY ATTENTION, AND LET ME KNOW IF THINGS EVER FEEL OFF WITH THE *RIDER.*

EVERYTHING'S OKAY WITH YOU? NOTHING FEELS OFF?

OFF?

YEAH... DIFFERENT... OFF?

YOU DO REALIZE THAT HALF MY LIFE IS SPENT TRANSFORMING INTO SOMETHING I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND, FIGHTING MUTANTS, SUPER-POWERED KILLERS...

...AND HAVING TO HIDE IT ALL FROM THE PEOPLE CLOSEST TO ME, RIGHT?

I WOULD SAY THAT MY ENTIRE LIFE HAS FELT *OFF* SINCE I FOUND THIS BIKE.

I'VE GOT TO GO. I'M TRYING TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT WITH STACY TONIGHT.

-PTOOEY-

DAMMIT.

SOMETHING IS WRONG. I CAN FEEL IT.

THE RAVENCROFT INSTITUTE FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE, WESTCHESTER COUNTY...

RAVENCROFT

WHAM WHAM

LAUGHTON! FEEDING TIME! BACK AWAY FROM THE DOOR.

CREEEK

I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'VE GOT TO SPOON-FEED THIS GUY.

HE CAN'T BE OUT OF THOSE RESTRAINTS. THEY SAY HE'S DANGEROUS.

C'MON... A LITTLE RUNT LIKE HIM?

TURN AROUND, LAUGHTON.

LAUGHTON! I SAID *TURN AROUND!* I DON'T CARE IF YOU STARVE--

I AM CALLED *SCARECROW...*

...AND I FEED ON... FEAR.

CONSIDER THIS MY APPETIZER.

I SENSE I'M ABOUT TO *FEAST.*

KTHOOM

YOU HAVE BOTH FREELY ACCEPTED THE MASTER'S GIFT... AND KNOW THE SMALL PRICE HE ASKS.

YES... I FEEL STRONGER THAN EVER.

THIS IS ACCEPTABLE TO ME... PROVIDED I GET TO *FEED.*

FEED ALL YOU WISH... THE MASTER WILL VERY MUCH APPRECIATE THAT.

BUT THERE ARE TWO SMALL TASKS YOU WILL NEED-- DARE I SAY *WANT*-- TO ACCOMPLISH.

YES...TELL ME WHAT IS REQUIRED.

HOPEFULLY, YOU DO NOT MIND IF I RELEASE THE FEAR THAT DWELLS WITHIN THESE MEAT SACKS AND FEAST UPON THAT WHICH EMERGES.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO JOIN ME AS SUITS YOUR DESIRES.

ENJOY... FOR TONIGHT, YOU HAVE WORK TO DO.

AIIIIIIIEEEEE!

NOOOOOO!

LATER...

IS IT DONE, BROKER?

YES, MASTER.

BOTH OF THEM ARE OFF TO COMPLETE THEIR INDIVIDUAL TASKS.

THEY KNOW THEY ARE TO BRING *THEM* TO ME? *ALIVE?*

I HAVE EXPLAINED THE CONDITIONS, BUT THEY ARE BOTH--AS ONE WOULD SAY-- WILD CARDS.

I WILL DO MY BEST TO SUPERVISE.

YOU THERE... THE ONE WITH ALL YOUR LIMBS...

...COME A LITTLE CLOSER.

TIMES SQUARE, MANHATTAN.

STACY... YOU KNOW WE COULD'VE COME HERE TOGETHER ON MY BIKE?

YEAH...I'M JUST OFF DUTY, AND--BESIDES-- I'M NOT A BIG FAN OF THAT THING.

EVERYTHING STARTED GOING SOUTH BETWEEN THE TWO OF US WHEN THAT BIKE CAME INTO YOUR LIFE.

WHERE IS IT?

I LEFT IT IN A GARAGE AROUND THE CORNER.

GOOD.

SO...

YEAH.

STACE... I KNOW THINGS HAVE BEEN WEIRD BETWEEN US. I'M JUST HOPING...

HOPING *WHAT*, DAN?

HOPING THAT THINGS CAN GO BACK TO *NORMAL*? THAT WE CAN JUST GO BACK TO THE WAY THINGS WERE BEFORE?

I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT WITH YOUR MOM SINCE BARB...

...BUT SHE WAS *MY* FRIEND AS WELL AS YOUR SISTER. HER DEATH CRUSHED ME.

YOU PULLING AWAY FROM ME... NOT TALKING TO ME...SPENDING ALL OF YOUR TIME ON THAT BIKE OF YOURS...HURTS EVEN MORE.

I'M SORRY.

YEAH...ME TOO. BUT I DON'T SEE US GOING BACK TO ANYTHING RESEMBLING NORMAL--

WHAT THE--?!

AIIIIIIEEEE! NOOO...NO...NOOOOOO!

I DON'T KNOW *WHAT'S* GOING ON, BUT THIS IS NO ORDINARY BLACKOUT.

YEAH... YOU'RE RIGHT.

STAY HERE!

I'M CALLING THIS IN AND GOING TO SEE IF I CAN FIND WHERE THOSE SCREAMS ARE COMING FROM.

STACE?!

DAMMIT!

THIS HAS GOT TO BE *BLACKOUT.*

THIS IS BIGGER THAN ANYTHING I'VE SEEN HIM DO BEFORE, BUT...IT'S GOT HIM WRITTEN ALL OVER IT.

I'VE GOT TO GET TO THE BIKE.

I'VE GOT TO--

UGH!

WHO IS DOING THIS? DID YOU SEE HIM?

HE... HE...

IT'S ALL SO DARK...ALL WE COULD SEE WERE *FANGS.*

OH... DANIEL...

YOU HAD TO *KNOW* IT WAS ME!

AND *YOU* WITHOUT THAT ACCURSED MOTORCYCLE OF YOURS.

I GUESS *WE* WILL HAVE TO HAVE FUN WITHOUT YOUR FLAMING-SKULLED FRIEND.

AT THAT MOMENT...

PAWN

FWOOSH

HONESTLY, I'VE BEEN ASKED TO NOT *KILL* YOU, BUT...

...THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE CAN'T HAVE SOME FUN, DOES IT?

TOOM

I'VE WANTED TO TASTE YOUR BLOOD FOR *SUCH* A LONG--

TOOM

ARRRGH!

WHAT?!

STACY! NO...DON'T!

STACY!

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

I AM *NOT* GOING TO LET HIM TAKE *HER* FROM ME TOO!

VROOOM

FWOOSH

BLACKOUT!
I AM HERE!
WHERE ARE YOU?
I'M RIGHT...
...HERE!
NOT THAT THIS CAN ACTUALLY DO ANYTHING TO THE NEW ME, BUT...IT IS IRRITATING.
LET'S NOT RUN ANY-MORE.
I'D LIKE TO FINISH THINGS UP HERE.
IT SUCKS BEING YOU.
UGH!
UGH!
VROOOOM
FWAM

RUN.

I--ER--NO. I'M A POLICE--

RUN!

OH WELL... YOU'VE GONE AND RUINED MY PLAYTIME WITH DANIEL.

I FIND THAT UPSETTING. THOUGH...

...IT CHANGES *NOTHING!*

OH YES...THE *CHAIN.*

I AM A BIT STRONGER THAN WHEN WE LAST MET.

I DON'T THINK *ANY* OF YOUR USUAL BAG OF TRICKS WILL AFFECT ME IN MY CURRENT STATE.

HMMM...

I THINK *NOT.*

I WAS JUST CURED OF THE SCARRING INFLICTED ON ME THE *LAST* TIME I TRIED TO BITE INTO THAT FLAMING THROAT OF YOURS.

WHAM

OH...YOU HAVE *NO* IDEA HOW MUCH I WANT TO FINISH THIS HERE AND NOW.

BUT...

...*THAT* WAS NOT THE DEAL.

AND THEY DON'T SEEM LIKE THE TYPE OF FOLKS TO FOOL AROUND WITH.

I DID TELL YOU I WAS STRONGER, RIGHT?

WELL, THE PEOPLE WHO ENHANCED MY STRENGTH ALSO GAVE ME...

...A LITTLE SOMETHING ELSE!

SHOOM

WE *WILL* MEET AGAIN SHORTLY.

YOU AND YOUR *FRIEND* WILL HAVE HIGH MOTIVATION TO FIND *US* SOON ENOUGH.

I MUST FIND...

FWOOSH

...STACY.

NO.

THE DUTCHESS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS, RHINEBECK, NY.

THE QUENTIN CARNIVAL IS WRAPPING UP A WEEK OF THRILLS AND CHILLS.

CARNIVAL OWNER--AND MOTORCYCLE STUNT PERFORMER **JOHNNY BLAZE**--IS TAKING AN ENCORE LAP BEFORE HIS CROWD.

QUENTIN CA

THERE IS VERY LITTLE I LIKE BETTER THAN *THIS.*

WELL... ***ROXANNE*** STILL CAN MAKE MY HEART SKIP A BEAT... AND WITH ***CRAIG*** AND ***EMMA***... THEY ARE MY WORLD!

HEY...HOW ARE MY FAVORITE WIFE AND KIDS?

I GAVE THESE TWO THE OPTION OF MOMMY OR DADDY READING TO THEM TONIGHT, AND...

I WIN?!

YES!

GIVE ME FIVE MINUTES TO STOW THE BIKE AWAY, AND I'M READY TO DIVE INTO ANY BOOK YOU LIKE... WIZARDS, TALKING ANIMALS, YOU NAME IT!

MOMMY!

NO!

WHAT'S WRONG, KIDDOS?

I'M SCARED.

ME TOO! WE HAVE TO GO! HAVE TO GET DADDY!

OH... *DADDY* WILL BE ALONG SOON ENOUGH.

AND THEN...

...YOU CAN ALL BE SCARED *TOGETHER!*

TO BE CONTINUED!

NEXT: THE SCARECROW UNLEASHED!

THE MYSTERIOUS BROKER HAS POWERED UP GHOST RIDER'S NEXT NEMESIS, AND IT'S GOING TO TAKE THE COMBINED HELLFIRE OF RIDER AND JOHNNY BLAZE TO STOP HIM!

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